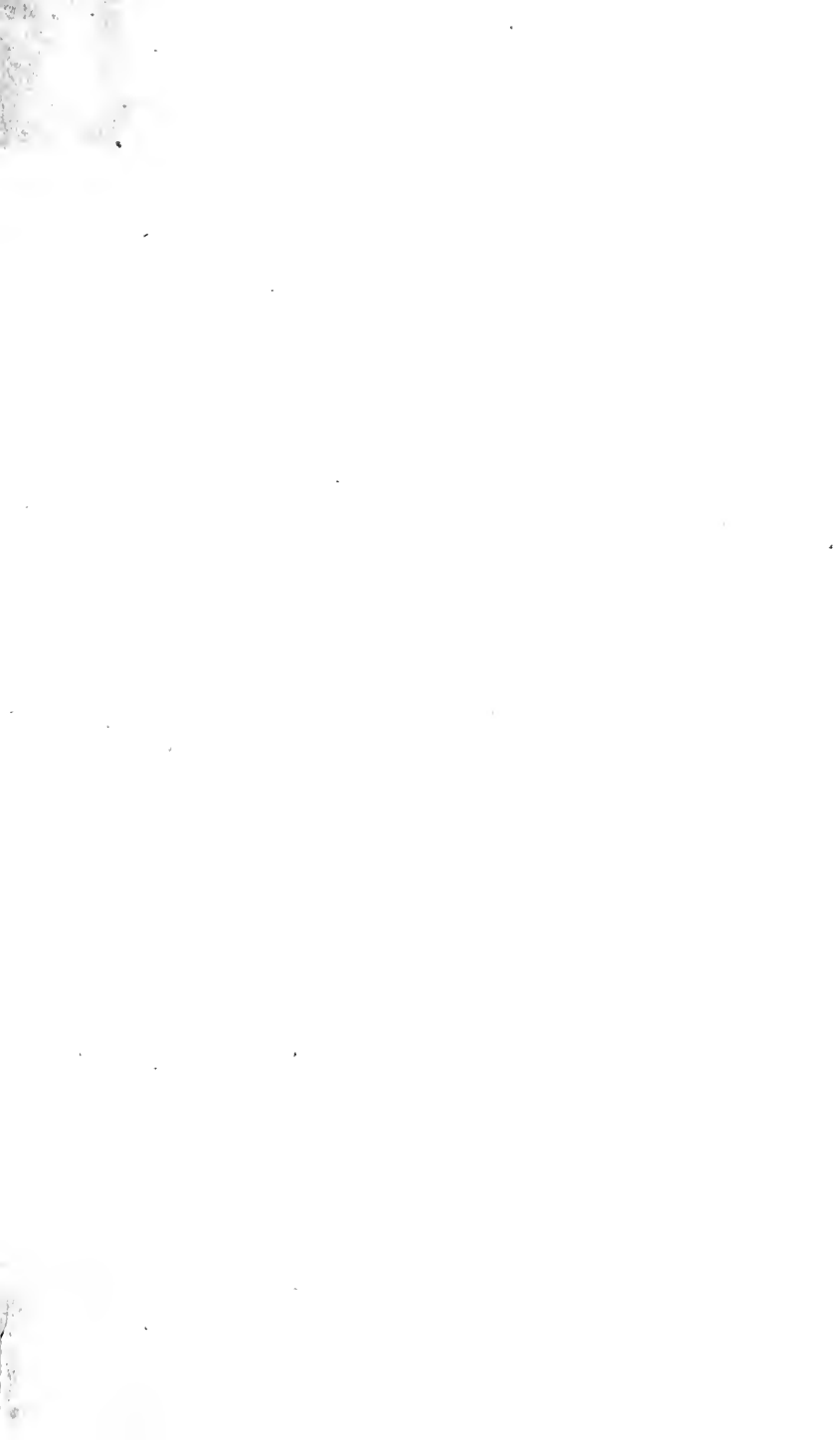




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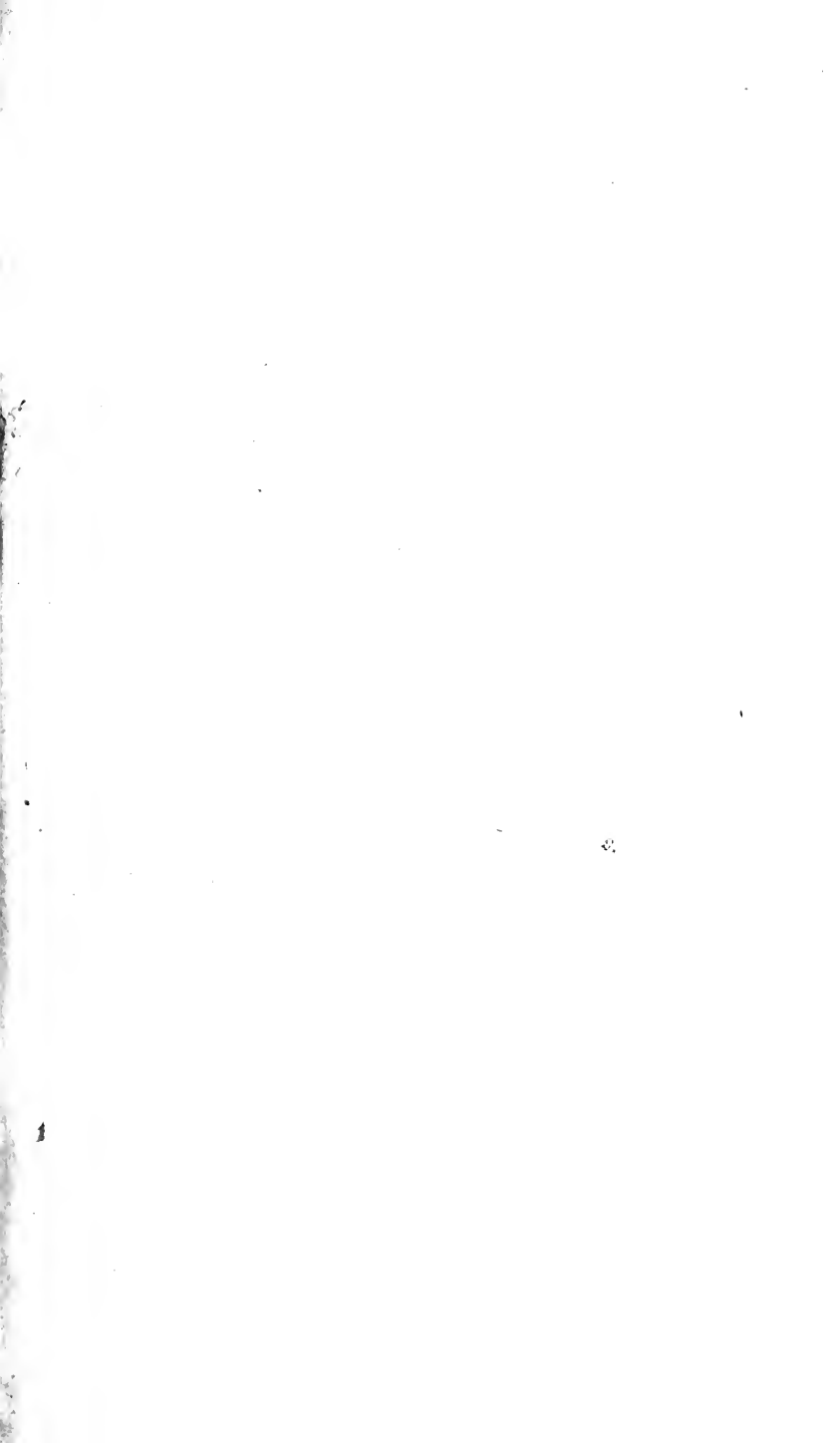
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- 1 Scott's Rights of God.
- 2 Miller's Fast Sermon. Yellow In.
- 3 Dwight on Goodrich.
- 4 Morse's Masonic Sermon.
- 5 McWhorter's Missionary Sermon.
- 6 Dodge's on Withered Spoon.
- 7 Pearce at the Ordination of Belcher.
^{Kirkland on Belcher's.}
- 8 Bygood on Prophecies.
- 9 Lumbull's Ordination Sermon.
- 10 Emmons's Ordination Sermon.
- 11 Calvin on James.
- 12 Steven's Ordination Sermon.



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CHARACTERISTICS

IN THE

PROPHECIES

Applicable to, and Descriptive of,

THE

POWER AND DURATION

OF THE

FRENCH REPUBLIC.

ALSO,

A FEW OBSERVATIONS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

PROBABLE RESULT

OF THE

PRESENT DISORDERED STATE

OF THE

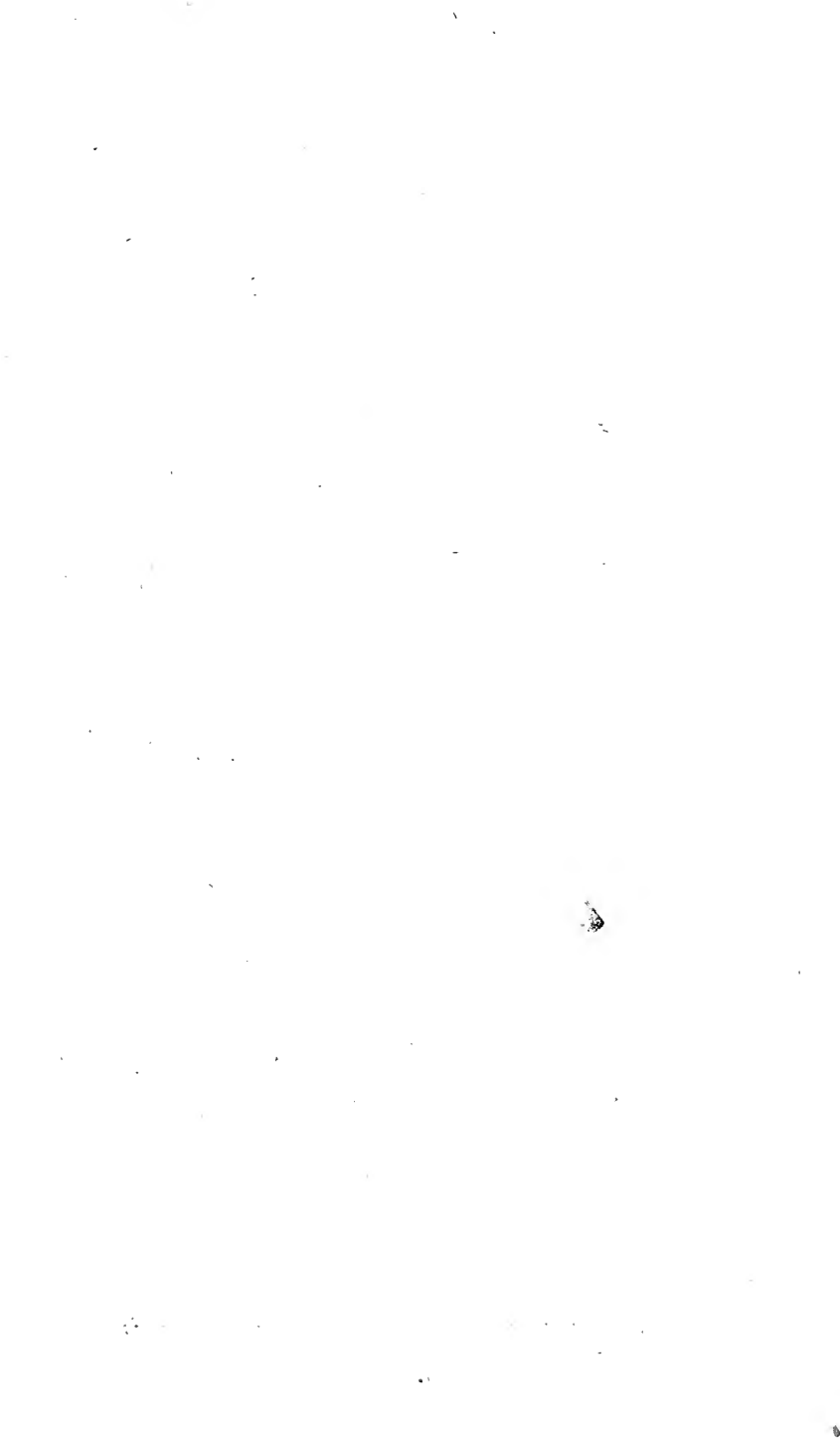
CIVIL AND POLITICAL WORLD.

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1798.



CHARACTERISTICS

IN THE

PROPHECIES, &c.

THERE are some who apprehend that the prophecies are inconsistent with human Reason, and therefore, as the works of delusion, they reject them altogether.

There are others, who believe them to be the genuine offspring of inspiration ; but they are not designed to give us any ideas of many important future events. If any one presume to think, that by the prophecies he can calculate the time of Christ's second advent, within fifty or an hundred years, they say it is all a vain and idle conjecture ; for of that day and hour knoweth no man &c. but we suppose *day and hour* here are to be taken literally, and therefore, is no evidence that the time of that event is not described and pointed out in the prophecies ; and that we cannot form a rational conjecture about the time of that advent. But even if it were to be taken in the sense they contend for, it might have been revealed after the time our Saviour spake those words. And we find Rev. 1, 1. The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass. And the second advent of Christ is one of those things : **BEHOLD I COME QUICKLY.** These observations are made, not with an expectation of removing any deep rooted prejudices, but with a view of vindicating a different opinion.

Before we proceed to the particular subject in view, we shall make a few remarks on two volumes, entitled : "Illustrations of Prophecy, in the course of which are elucidated many predictions which occur in Isaiah or Daniel, in the writings of the Evangelists, or the book of Revelation, and which are thought to foretell, among other great events, a revolution in France, favourable to the interests of mankind, the overthrow of the papal power, and of ecclesiastical tyranny, the downfall of civil despotism, and the subsequent melioration of the state of the world."

That something good may be derived from the French revolution is a possible case ; but whether their intentions are better, than those of the sons of Jacob, who maliciously sold their brother, remains to be proved. That the state of the world will be meliorated by the French revolution, is more than I can believe. The idea appears to me to have no foundation in prophecy. The author says, "in truth, so many scriptural interpreters have apprehended a revolution in France to be predicted by the apostle, that I am fearful of exhausting the readers patience, by an examination of the names.

It has been maintained in England and Scotland, in Holland and France, for above a century and an half. Universally will it be granted to carry the greater weight, because it is grounded on the same passage. upon a portion of the 11th c. of the apocalypse."

The passage is, "The same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, by which tenth part is to be understood, one of the ten kingdoms into which the great city, Romish Babylon was divided. This, many take to be the kingdom of France."

The prophetic narrative respecting the witnesses in the 11th c. is evidently in the nature of an epilogue. This observation properly attended to, renders any reference to the French Monarchy or Republic, extremely improbable. The evident anacronism, we trust, will be sufficient to set aside the application of those words, either to the Monarchy or Republic of France.

This epilogue is placed between the 6th and 7th trumpets; and immediately follows the historic view given of the transactions under the 6th trumpet. It is not an episode or digression from the main subject; for John having given a historic view of the transaction of temporal powers, under the 6th trumpet: in the epilogue he represents to us, the state and sufferings of Christians under the same power; and ultimately their triumphant deliverance from their enemies.

In the 5th and 6th trumpets, John evidently gives us a historic view of temporal powers, and their transactions in the east. Before he entirely leaves them, he makes this epilogue which by every rule of construction, ought to have some connection with that which precedes it; and cannot with propriety be referred to powers, which have not as yet been mentioned, and are not introduced till after the sounding of the 7th trumpet. It is extremely improbable that John should, in this place and connection introduce a power, which by the confession of all, he does not describe, before we arrive at the 13th c. where we find a beast with seven heads and ten horns crowned, one of which horns, it is generally agreed, intends the French Monarchy. The epilogue naturally suggests this idea to us, That it is John's last address to the Christians in the east: after which, he commences and carries on a history of the transactions in the west. The 5th and 6th trumpets, in connection with the 11th c. plainly furnish this historic view: First, John in the 5th trumpet introduces Mahomet and the saracen power, which last, was, in about three hundred years nearly annihilated. Second, in the 6th trumpet he introduces four extraordinary powers, which by some are supposed to constitute the Ottoman power: but most probably intend Mahmud the Gaznevide, Togrul Beg, Zingis Khan, and Tamerlane; because the very extraordinary transactions of these powers, may induce us to believe, that they are noticed in prophecy; and because it preserves the thread of John's history, without any anacronism. The last of these powers came down below the destruction of the seven churches in Asia, which happened a little after the year 1260. The epilogue had in view ultimately the comfort and consolations of the churches in the east: They are assured of 1260 years preservation: for the witnesses no doubt intend the true christians in those churches; they are also plainly informed of the complete destruction of those churches; and of the stern severity of the ministers of vengeance, who would not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. I cannot find that the Greek word *mnema* here used, ever means a common grave: and if it does not, the translation gives a larger meaning, than

three days and an half, the witnesses should live again. These days have no doubt a prophetic meaning, and as John is in the days of the seven trumpets, which include a period of 1260 years, three days and an half will be 630 years : the great event therefore referred to, must happen about the year 1890. That such an event as the resurrection of the witnesses, will happen then, or near about that time, we have the most clear and satisfactory evidence from Daniel and John. It is to be collected from Daniel as follows : The seven times that were to pass over Nebuchadnezzar, I take to be prophetic ; and consequently intend 2520 years. And from the rising up of Alexander the great, to the cleansing of the sanctuary, there are to be 2300 years ; and from the rising up of Mahomet, to the end of the Mahometan delusion 1260 years. These several periods end in the year 1890, and are all that we find in Daniel that may be called precise periods. In John we have only one precise prophetic period, which is in the 11th c. where it is said, that the holy city shall be trodden under foot forty two months, or 1260 years. And the thread of the discourse is a sufficient evidence, that the gentiles designate the Mahometan delusion.

Another part of John's description is, that there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell. If the translation had said no more than the Greek, it would have been, *And the tenth of the city fell.* And whether a tenth part, or tenth head of the city is intended, requires mature consideration ; for the construction will be different, according as the one or the other is adopted. The term, *tenth*, does not necessarily oblige us to include in the term, *city*, ten kingdoms in Europe. The word *city* may be used in a more extensive sense ; and the word *tenth*, may be so used as to be expressive of the whole of the city : it may be, and sometimes is used integrally. God has in his wisdom seen fit to represent to us under the image of a man, several distinct parts of a great city ; among which, Babylon was the head of gold. There can be no doubt but John has reference to this great image, when he says, five are fallen &c. If this be the mode of computation, nine parts having previously fallen, when the tenth falls, the whole falls. We may easily reckon up nine parts of the great city as follows : Babylon, Persia, Macedonia, the Roman Commonwealth, Imperial Rome, the eastern and western Empires, seven in number. The ten horns are represented as growing out of the head of the foregoing powers, are cotemporary with each other, and are to be reckoned collectively as but one, which is an eighth head. The ninth is the Mahometan power. The tenth and last part may be such a state of society, as has been exhibited to us in France, since 1789. This last state of mankind is represented as exceeding all the other parts in wickedness. The characteristics of it, point out anarchy and confusion, bloodshed, and great political animosities and divisions, as abounding when God shall come to judge the world for its extreme wickedness ; and the time of this coming must be in the tenth and last part of the great city.

And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand some translate, seven thousand names of men were slain, but the Greek conveys neither of these ideas : The Greek word *chiliades*, translated, *thousand*, is a substantive, and necessarily takes a genitive after it.

sands of men were slain to whom belonged seven names, which refers us to the destruction of the beast having seven heads, in which the others are apparently included. John does not leave his Christian friends in the east, till he has exhibited to them the end of tyrannical power and their glorious triumph over their enemies, in a happy resurrection, after a period of 630 years.

The French, as well as all the other nations of the earth, may experience the effects of the great earthquake, yet it is plain to me that they are not particularly referred to by that passage.

We now proceed to point out where we apprehend the French Republic is exhibited in the prophecies, and the characteristics will, we trust, apply themselves naturally, and without any violence done to them, to that power.

We find the passage in Daniel 7th, 7th. as follows:—

After this I saw in the night visions, and beheld a fourth beast dreadful, and terrible and strong, exceedingly &c. and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots, and in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, &c. and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.

I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most high; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said &c. the ten horns out of this kingdom, are ten kings that shall arise, and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first (the septuagint renders the last words, he shall exceed all before him in wickedness) and he shall subdue three kings; and he shall speak great words against the most high, and shall wear out the saints of the most high, and shall think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time; but the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it unto the end.

I am sensible that some commentations have endeavored to shew that the Papal power is designated by this little horn; and so it appeared to me formerly: but I could never find any three horns, or powers, that the Pope had destroyed: nor could I see that the Papal power arose after the ten horns, it is most probably one of them, and it arose before the others.

The characteristics of the little horn are,—

1. He is to pluck up three horns by the roots.

It may be impossible for the most accurate critic in the Hebrew, to decide positively, that the translation should not have been, *a horn for a little time*, instead of a little horn, it is not described as little in point of size or strength; but as more powerful than any of the ten horns. We find the Roman commonwealth called a little horn, Dan. 8. 9. And out of one of them (that is of the four notable ones into which Alexander's empire was divided) came forth a little horn, which waxed exceedingly great toward the South, and toward the

East, and toward the pleasant land. The construction may be, that in the beginning the horn was little; but in process of time, it waxed exceeding great. But whether the horn is to be long lived or not, must be collected from a consideration of other passages. That the French Republic, was little in the beginning, compared with the numerous foes she had to contend with, is a matter of public notoriety. If the little horn, as we suppose, intends the French Republic, the question is, what three horns has it plucked up by the roots. The answer is, the French Monarchy, the seven United Provinces, and the Republic of Venice. At present the question seems to be sufficiently answered by the actual state of these three powers; but a little time may throw greater light upon this question.

2 He has eyes like the eyes of man.

This characteristic, designates the great number and vigilance of those employed in the administration of the government. Zenophon says, that Cyrus dispatched a great number of officers into various parts of his dominions; and that they were called the eyes of Cyrus.

3 His looks are to be more stout than his fellows.

By his fellows, cotemporary powers are plainly intended: and this third mark is now a prominent feature in the French Republic.

4. He is to make war with the saints, and to prevail against them, until the ancient of days comes.

Whether this is to be in fact, a war of extermination, or a public, and professed hostility, consisting in an opposition by words, and disseminating principles, and sentiments avowedly antichristian, may be a question. The latter mode probably tends more directly to destroy Christianity, than real persecution: and is therefore a more effectual mode of warfare; both kinds of warfare have been carried on by the power referred to: of which many of the Roman Catholic clergy by experience, have witnessed. The warfare is to last until the coming of the ancient of days, not to regenerate, but utterly to exterminate the power. If this coming intended only special and invisible communications of the holy spirit, no period of time can be pointed out when God has not in this way visited his saints: consequently something else must be intended by this coming: it must mean a way in which he had not come before: and therefore a personal coming.

5 He is to exceed in wickedness or hatred all those that have been before him.

Our translation has, he shall be diverse from the first. The Hebrew may have this meaning, and it also has the former: and as the septuagint has chosen the former meaning, it is most probably the true sense. There is no impropriety in applying this character to the power we are treating of; it may however in process of time be more evident.

6 He is to speak great words against the most high.

This character applies literally. Atheism has been openly and publicly avowed.

7. He is to wear out the saints of the most high.

This must continue to be the effect, whilst the present principles prevail in the French Republic, the saints will be worn out and des-

troyed, by ridicule and philology, vainly so called. This 7th mark seems to be a necessary consequence of the 6th, for if they speak against the most high, they will not think favourably of those who speak in his favour: it is evident that this power is to be completely antichristian, there is to be a complete apostacy from, and renunciation of Christian Religion. In 2. Thes. 2, 3, it is said let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition. Falling away is too feeble an expression for *apostacy*, as it is in the Greek: the Papal power has not thus abandoned Divine Revelation; and there is abundant evidence that it is not the little horn.

8. He is to think to change times and laws.

This Characteristic is peculiarly applicable to the French Republic, and no other power that I know of. They have changed times, for what beneficial purpose, except a fulfilment of the prophecy, I cannot divine.

9. Law is to be given into his hands until a time, times and the dividing of time. Power and authority are to be exercised by the little horn for a limited time only: when this power shall begin to exercise its authority is not specified; but whenever it commences, it continues afterwards to exercise its power, until the termination of a certain 1260 years. Commentators have generally ascribed to this little horn a duration of 1260 years, without considering the precise words of the Prophet, which has led to a wrong application. It is only said that law shall be given into his hands, until the consummation of a certain period; it is not said he shall have it for, and during the term of 1260 years. He may have the power only an 100 years, and yet have it until the end of a certain prophetic 1260 years. The author of these remarks has lived until the consummation of the year 1797, but he is not 1797 years old.

In the last chapter of Daniel, it is asked, how long shall it be to the end of these wonders? It is answered, it shall be for a time, times and an half or 1260 years. This period evidently commences, and ends with the Mahometan Power: and to the end of this period the little horn is to continue, which wants about 85 years to accomplish it; the Mahometan power having existed 1175 years.

It appears to me, that there are no prophetic descriptions in the Bible, that apply more precisely to their real object, than the characteristics of this little horn do to the French Republic: and if so, we must conclude that it will be permitted by divine providence to fill up the sum of its wickedness. And should this be the case, what mortification must await the author of the illustrations of prophecy. The great advantages to be derived from the French Revolution, will all be illusory and chimerical: the state of the world from that source, will experience no melioration.

Having demonstrated, and we hope satisfactorily, that the author's ideas about the Revolution in France, are not grounded on scripture prophecy, and that they are erroneous; it follows of course, that his ideas about the Millennium must also be erroneous. The dispute about that state, is divided between those who construe figuratively, and those who hold to the literal meaning of sundry passages of scripture. The author of illustrations of prophecy, con-

tends earnestly for a figurative construction: one objection to a literal construction is, that it would be a continued miracle, if Jesus Christ should descend personally and reign on earth. Has Christ ever been on the earth? How was he here, miraculously or otherwise? Miracles, though above, are not inconsistent with human reason: and Christ having been on earth once miraculously, nay twice, by an extraordinary generation, and by a resurrection, he may consequently be here again.

There are several passages in Daniel, that are explicitly opposed to a figurative construction: in immediate connection with the little horn, we have the following descriptions. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the ancient of days did sit, whose garments were white as snow, the hairs of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire: a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him, thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was sit and the books were opened.

I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most high; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion; to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

By these passages it is evident, that a glorious kingdom commences, the judgment sits, and the books are opened, in immediate connection with the destruction and end of the little horn: and not only so, but as the little horn is not the only power on earth, it says generally, *The Thrones were cast down*: that is, all wicked power and dominion are to be destroyed.

This matter is made more evident, if this be possible, in the latter part of the 11th, and beginning of the 12th chapter of Daniel, where with the destruction of the Mahometan power, is connected the resurrection, and sundry other important matters, that can only take place at the day of judgment.

“ And he shall plant the Tabernacles of his palaces between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain, yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth up for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as there never was since there was a nation, even to that sametime. And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book; and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And one said to the man clothed in linen, how long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man which was clothed in linen, when he held up his right hand, and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half: and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.”

The ablest commentators have agreed, that the Mahometan power is designated by the words, *he shall plant the Tabernacles, &c.* It is therefore plainly confirmed by an oath, that the resurrection shall take place at the time of the destruction of the Mahometan power. Otherwise what do these words intend, *all these things shall be finished.* The destruction of the Mahometan power is the very epoch for the commencement of many other important matters. At that very time, the deliverance of thy people, of every one that is found written in the book, and the resurrection shall take place. In 1260 years from a certain epoch, all these things are to be finished: and that epoch seems evidently to be, the commencement of the Mahometan power. We are therefore only 85 years from the time, when all these things shall be finished. If there be any figure in these passages, I wish sincerely to be informed how I am to understand it: if there be none, we are not far distant from the general resurrection; and if so, there will either be no Millenium, or it must take place after the resurrection. The explanation here given, must remain good, whether the French Republic be, or not, the little horn. That the resurrection shall take place at the end of the present temporal powers of the world, is founded in the immutability of an oath.



ON THE MILLENIUM.

I HAVE perused with attention, many pieces which have been published on this subject. It is a subject in which every reflecting Christian must feel himself deeply interested at the present time; for the commencement of the Millenium, though the present generation may not live to see it, yet the next may, according to the most approved expositors. The learned have viewed the immediate subjects of the Millenium, in very various and different lights; when men of learning, integrity and capacity, with minds disposed to receive the truth, cannot agree in sentiments about it, it is manifestly an evidence of no small intricacy in the subject. It seems apparent that the truth must be contained in some one of the following propositions: the members of the Millenium, will be men in a state of natural succession; or they will be constituted of these, and the martyrs raised from the grave, who are to be the officers in that kingdom; or lastly, the members of the Millenium kingdom, will be all of them raised from the grave. These three propositions have evidently very different degrees of importance: the first is less important than the second, and the second than the third. If none of them could be demonstrated to be true, or false, according to the common rules of the conduct of the human mind, the last ought to be received as true, because it is infinitely the most important. The different advocates for the two first propositions, severally deduce them from Rev. 20. 4. 5. 6. It is generally allowed, that these verses describe the commencement of the Millenium kingdom.

It is necessary to introduce the purport of these three verses, for the purpose of forming a judgment as to their figurative or literal sense.

First. John sees thrones, persons sitting on them, to whom judgment is given,

Second. The souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God.

Third. Every one who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, neither had received his mark on their foreheads, nor in their hands they lived &c.

These are the subjects of which John speaks and the words are sufficiently extensive, to embrace all the faithful Christians; and all the faithful Jews. The qualities and properties attributed to these subjects are, 1st *they lived*; 2d they reigned with Christ a thousand years; 3d blessed. 4th holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; 5th it is the first resurrection; 6th over these, or on such, the second death shall have no power; 7th, they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. There are evidently, three distinct classes of beings, peculiar and distinguishing privileges are conferred on the first class. They sit on thrones, and are invested with judiciary power, excepting these, the qualities and properties are common to the three classes, there are two special, and particular privileges, and seven that are common.

That the special privileges of sitting on thrones, and being invested with judiciary power, will be the privileges of the twelve apostles, is proved by the explicate words of our Saviour; that is, that these privileges will be conferred on them, after the resurrection, and not before; he says they shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. It is not implied in these words, that there shall be no more than twelve thrones; the Revelations frequently mention four and twenty; which are evidently the full and compleat number of thrones. These two privileges belong to immortal, and not to mortal men. Can scriptural evidence be adduced to show, that they may be the properties of mortal men? Such evidence we trust, cannot be produced from scripture. The advocates of a figurative construction, allow that there is no figure as to these privileges; but they say that those who are invested with these privileges, are natural men. Extraordinary powers we prove by the infallible words of inspiration; Can any scripture be produced to show that more than ordinary powers belong to mortal men? we conclude, without fear of refutation, that these two properties are peculiar to a resurrection life: the figurative sense of the whole passage would stand on stronger ground, if it could be demonstrated, that these are not the properties of a resurrection life.

The second class is, the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God. An objection is made here, by those who construe figuratively, which is intended as an objection to the literal sense: it is this that the resurrection is never spoken of elsewhere, by the living of the soul; in answer to this, we might demand a proof that it is so spoken of here: in a philological view, if the resurrection be intended, how should John express himself? he could not say that he saw the bodies that had

them by that which constitutes their personal identity ; whether the soul had been asleep or dead, or otherwise cannot be deduced from John's words ; if John sees them after the resurrection, he sees the soul united to a glorious body. Can the resurrection life be predicated of any other thing, than the soul ? can the life of a rational man be predicated of any other thing belonging to the man except a rational soul ? But the objection takes it for granted, that life is predicated of the soul ; be it so. Had the soul always been alive, is not a resurrection life attended with as many different circumstances, and more than attend the conversion of a soul ? But we say it remains to be proved, that John predicates life of the soul simply considered. The grammatical construction of the 4th verse has perplexed commentators. John tells us what he saw ; thrones, and those sitting on them, and the souls of the beheaded. *Tas pseuhaston pepelekisfenon*, an accusative following the verb ; the question is, how far the verb *I saw* extends ; does it extend to the word, *Outines* or *every one who* ? if so, the grammar is not good ; or the words, *souls of them*, must be understood, and be placed before the words, *every one who*, or simply, *who* ; but the sense is good, and the grammar is good, if we extend the verb *I saw*, no farther than the souls of the beheaded ; John first tells us what he saw, and the words, *every one who had not worshipped, they lived*, is a distinct assertion by itself. Now these words contain all that John had seen before, as to subjects ; those sitting on thrones, and the beheaded did not worship the beast. In this sense, *they lived*, is affirmed of *every one who*, and not of the soul, so that in every view the observation has no force in it. The soul is a term often used in scripture, and intends the whole man.

The third class, is, *every one who had not worshipped the Beast nor his image*, &c. Under these characters, the Beast, &c. all wicked temporal powers are included, that are to continue until Christ's second advent. By these words, *who had not worshipped*, the whole body of Christians are included, whether they died as Martyrs, or otherwise. I do not recollect at present any objection to the literal sense of these words, derived from the words themselves, nor can we add any thing, to make a plain passage more plain. The Beast, and the image of the Beast, embrace at least 1890 years. Life being predicated of all those that had an opportunity to worship them, must be predicated of many that had been dead.

If this part of the text be read in the manner I have suggested, the whole text is complete in sense and in grammar, and if it had been divided into two verses, no question would ever have been made about the fullness of the sense, or the accuracy of the grammar. It would read as follows : " I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them ; and the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God."

" And every one who had not worshipped the Beast, &c. They lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

This last passage contains all the subjects that John says he saw in the first part ; and a great multitude, besides those seated on thrones, and the Martyrs. According to this division, John does not predicate life of the soul, but of every one who had not worshipped,

have been numerous ; I have found none that suggest this plain and easy division. The English translation seems to forbid all criticism. The dangerous error, contained in the words, *and which had not*, instead of the words, *and every one who had not*, ought to be urged with zeal. The several properties that are afterwards particularly attributed to these subjects, are not the properties of Martyrs alone. The Beast, and the image of the Beast, occupy a space of time, not short of 1890 years. Every one who was not guilty of idolatry, during this period, and surely Martyrs were not, and many besides Martyrs were not, have sundry properties predicated of them, which are the very properties and qualities promised to the saints in the resurrection life.

John does not assert that he saw every one who had not worshipped the Beast ; but that he saw some of them particularly, and this assertion of John, is very honourable for them. These sitting on thrones, and the Martyrs, might be so few in number, that John might distinctly see all of them individually. The whole body might be very numerous ; a great multitude which no man could number, as John expresses himself in another place. There seems to be a natural reason, why John might see distinctly, those who sat on thrones, and the Martyrs ; but if the whole body was very numerous, it seems to be against natural reason, that he should see every individual ; and the text conveys no idea that he did.

As to a multitude of general and diffuse objections against the literal sense of the passage, they apply to every thing, and consequently to nothing. We allow that there are figurative expressions made use of in the Revelations ; but it will not follow, from hence, that all is figurative ; and if not, such an objection must fail in a particular application. John asserts, that all who had lived, in a space of not less than 1890 years, live again. But the nature of the subject must be well considered : true, it must indeed ; but strange is the argument, that makes a plain passage, figurative, because others are so. If the rule be reciprocal, as the Logicians speak, then a figurative passage must be plain, because other passages are so, and this brings us to no rule at all. The nature of the subject, and the properties, must be considered by themselves. We must endeavour to see, whether the subject be a proper recipient of the properties ; and whether the properties can be predicated, as well of mortal as immortal subjects. The properties being of a particular kind, can they be the properties of two subjects, essentially different in their natures. As we fully believe that they cannot, we anxiously wish to make it appear so to others ; because the consequences are almost infinitely different. It appears to me, that there never was a question agitated of greater magnitude than this ; whether the resurrection precedes the happy state of the church denominated by the Millenium ? If it precedes, may God have mercy, on such as forcibly wrest the plain meaning of scripture. If it does not, they who hold to a literal sense, run no risk ; the Millenium state, according to them, gives a display of divine power, infinitely superior to what it can be in a figurative sense. Divine power is exerted but one way according to those who hold to figure. In how many different, glorious, and terrible ways must it be exhibited, if there is no figure ? Is not the

earth are to be matured for gathering, for to be trod in the wine press of the wrath of God : or are they to be matured, only for farther maturity and preservation ? For God's sake, for the sake of those who lack vision, let those whose duty it is, see that we be not overtaken and destroyed, without their having previously forewarned us. The literal sense leads inevitably to an awful catastrophe. The figurative, where does it lead us, if not true ? It leads to an error most fatal. But as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be, when ? Must this be after the Millenium ? I think not, but that it must be before it.

The first property is common to mortal and immortal beings ; "*they lived*," but when predicated of those that had been dead, it is an uncommon property. The words, *they lived*, are manifestly predicated of subjects, that had lived, and had ceased to live, in some manner or other. If we could fairly change these subjects, it is true, life may be predicated of mortal man, so long as a live. This predicate may therefore be applied in both senses ; and simply considered, would not be an evidence, whether applied to those who had, or who had not been dead. The sense can only be derived from a knowledge of the subject.

The second property is, *and reigned with Christ a thousand years*. To reign, is one thing ; to reign with Christ, another. That the saints are to reign with Christ, after the resurrection, and not before, is the explicit language of scripture. Reigning with Christ, implies a resurrection. The thousand years is a definite idea of reigning, not applicable to the lives they lived. That is, it is no limitation of existence. Though they may reign only a thousand years, they may exist ; they must exist forever. They are not all seated on thrones ; we see no reason for concluding that they are ; yet they all reign individually. The pronoun *every one who*, is segregative, and individual ; and it is predicated of every individual, that he shall reign with Christ a thousand years. Thus reigning individually a thousand years, without any limitation to existence, is an evidence of the immortality of the person so reigning. The same thing cannot be predicated of mortal beings. It agrees with the subject in the literal, but not in the figurative sense ; if the sense was figurative, it would be satisfied with a succession of mortal beings, for a thousand years, the individuals living no more than sixty or seventy years. The two next properties are blessedness and holiness. Blessed and holy is he, every individual is made a partaker of these properties. Mortal beings are not partakers of blessedness and holiness in an absolute sense. Flesh and blood cannot be blessed and holy. Paul is always filled with grief and sorrow, when he contemplates his mortal state. The reason of being blessed and holy, is, for over these the second death shall have no power. They are in possession of a blessed and holy immortality. This is a possession, which must give a zest to every joy ; without this, there is a great mixture of alloy. Our Saviour speaking of the righteous in the resurrection, says, they can die no more. These properties therefore, I apprehend, can only be predicated of immortal beings. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. If the resurrection is to be taken figuratively, and intends no more, than a revival of religion on earth. This bless-

from Christ, to the Millenium; and the words, *bleſſed and holy*, muſt be taken in a partial and limited, not in an abſolute ſenſe. Paul's bleſſedneſs and holineſs on earth, he always repreſents, as inconceivably ſhort of what they would be when he ſhould be with Chriſt.

The fifth is rather a circumſtance than a property; it is the firſt reſurrexion; an objection is raiſed here againſt the literal ſenſe, becauſe the epithet, *firſt* is no where elſe applied in this manner. If this was really a firſt, it would be no objection. The prophetic aſſertions of a ſingle prophet, have always been received as valid. If it is no where elſe thus applied, yet that there muſt be a firſt reſurrexion, is evident from the plain import of other paſſages of ſcripture.

The promiſes, that the meek ſhall inherit the earth may be conſidered as evidential of a firſt reſurrexion. Ps. 37. For evil doers ſhall be cut off, but thoſe that wait upon the Lord, they ſhall inherit the earth. The meek ſhall inherit the earth, and ſhall delight themſelves in abundance of peace. Such as be bleſſed of him, ſhall inherit the earth. The righteous ſhall inherit the land and dwell in it forever.

Acts. 7. 5. Of Abraham it is ſaid, he gave him none inheritance in it, no not to ſet his foot on, yet he promiſed that he would give it to him for a poſſeſſion. Matt. 5. 5. Bleſſed are the meek, for they ſhall inherit the earth. Paul ſpeaks of the firſt reſurrexion to a happy immortality. Phil. 3. 11. If by any means I might attain unto the reſurrexion of the dead.

The privileges of the firſt born were 1. A double portion, Duct. 21. 17. 2. A right to the prieſthood, Num. 3. 13. 3. The government and dominion. Gen. 27. 29.

1 Theſ. 4. 16. The dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt. Heb. 12. 23. To the general aſſembly and church of the firſt born. Ja. 1. 18. Of his own will begat he us with the word of his truth, that we ſhould be a kind of firſt fruits of his creatures. Rev. 14. 4. Theſe were redeemed from among men, being the firſt fruits unto God and the Lamb.

Firſt born, and firſt fruits, are ſo denominated, becauſe there are more born, and more fruits. And theſe phraſes are fully equivalent, to the firſt reſurrexion. The objection ſeems to have been made without having paid due attention to other paſſages of ſcripture. If the paſſage, Rom. 8. 23. has reference to all the true Chriſtians under the preſent diſpenſation, the term, firſt, is there expreſſive of farther, or more fruits, and not only they but ourſelves alſo which have the firſt fruits of the ſpirit, even we ourſelves groan within ourſelves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. The idea of a firſt reſurrexion, makes this whole paſſage plain and intellegible; otherwiſe it appears to me incomprehenſible. Reſurrexion in a general ſenſe, may intend the calling forth of good and bad from the grave; but the terms, the firſt reſurrexion, are confined to an immortal happy exiſtence. The hope of the creation is poſtponed to the time of the redemption of the body of thoſe who have the firſt fruits of the ſpirit. If there be not a firſt reſurrexion, it is impoſſible that this hope ſhould ever be realized. Paul has therefore as clearly foretold a firſt reſurrexion as John, he has not expreſſly called it a firſt reſurrexion, but he has laid down ſuch principles as will juſtify us in calling it a firſt reſurrexion. Who are to be the ſub-

jects of hope in the Millenium kingdom? The dead who are to be restored to life. This idea so far from militating against the doctrine of free and sovereign grace, establishes it, and opens a door for the display of it, without resorting to universalism, much broader than any we can possibly find upon a figurative construction.

The 6th property is, that over such the second death shall have no power. The second is only applicable to those who have once died. The mentioning of this circumstance, is an evidence that the subjects were in a state, where a second death is applicable, that is beyond the grave, where many will experience a second death. It carries this idea with it, that there is a power in the second death, which will be an occasion of infinite misery to the sinner; but it will not affect the righteous, even if they should be encompassed with that power. To illustrate my idea, I refer to the three, that were cast into the fiery furnace, who, though encompassed with the flames, experienced no inconvenience in that situation. Those that adhere to a figurative construction and suppose that the first resurrection means no more than an effectual and genuine revival of true religion, are of opinion, that this will be universal over all the world; but that towards the close of the period, there will be a very great apostacy, in consequence of which the second death will be inflicted on millions. This absurdity, is left without explanation; That blessed and holy beings, on whom the second death has no power, should apostatize, and become miserable and unholy beings, and be actually subject to the second death, is an incontrovertible contradiction, which is necessarily attached to the system.

The seventh property is, *They shall be Priests of God and of Christ.* Priests are holy officers, dedicated to holy things. They are relative officers. They have a superior, and an inferior relation. They are related to God and Christ; and to others, who stand in need of their ministerial offices. If the figurative construction prevails, such officers as these, cannot be in the Millenium. There can be no inferior relation, and the inferior relation is the essence of the ministerial office. If every individual in the Millenium, is to be a King and a Priest, there can be neither subject nor hearer. What is a King without subjects? and what is a priest without hearers? A figurative construction of the subjects, of whom these predicates are made, changes the nature of the properties, and renders them truly inconceivable.

And shall reign with him a thousand years; they are all to be kings, and all to be priests, Rev. 1. 6. and hath made us kings, and priests unto God, and his father, 5. 10. and hath made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth; 1 P. 2. 5. 9. ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood: but ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. In these passages there is no figure; they have relation to the Millenium kingdom, designating its officers, but not the subjects, Peter and John have both of them reference to Christians who lived between Christ's first coming and the Millenium. These are to be kings and priest, and they are to reign on the earth, not by proxy but personally; if we suffer with him we shall reign with him; if these seven properties cannot be universally predicated of a mortal man, the subjects of them must be immortal. It is not pre-

tended by those who hold to a figurative construction, that their happy mortals, in the Millenium, will be more genuine and firm christians, than were the apostles and martyrs. Can we predicate of the apostles and martyrs, while on earth, all the properties here predicated of these happy subjects? If we cannot, it is evident we cannot of any other mortal men. These seven properties could not be predicated of Paul himself whilst here on earth; nor can they be predicated of the christians jointly, or individually. Did Paul reign with Christ at all on earth, much more, a thousand years? But these are to reign individually, a thousand years. Was St. Paul blessed? no. Was he holy? no. Was he a royal priest? no. It is apparent, that there can be no genuine resemblance, between the church contended for by those who adopt a figurative sense, and the apostolic church. These properties constitute an essential difference. Thrones, judiciary power, reigning with Christ, blessedness and holiness. The descriptions are neither too high, nor too low, when applied to a resurrected life; but at present it appears to me, that they are much too high, if we apply them to mortal men.

All the arguments that I have seen in favor of a figurative meaning, are so diffuse, and general, that I have found it extremely difficult to make a particular application of them.

It is said by those who support a figurative sense, that "this description of the thrones, and of them that sat on them, is not to be understood, as if all who are afterwards said to live, and reign with Christ a thousand years, were to sit on these thrones; the figurative description seems to intimate order and government in the kingdom."

They who support the literal sense, say, the thrones are, as well as the persons sitting on them, realities; they do not say, that all sit on thrones; but that all reign; though they sit not on thrones, they are in and round about the throne. They say, there will be, not a figurative, but real order and government, and that the passage represents, exclusively, the officers of the government. In the figurative sense, there are none but officers, there are no subjects.

"They who understand this description in a figurative sense, observe, that all these expressions will very well bear such an interpretation. That it will be more agreeable to the stile of prophecy, in particular to the stile of this book, which every where abounds in figurative descriptions. That all these expressions are used in the ancient prophets, in a figurative meaning, and that there are unanswerable difficulties attending a literal interpretation of them."

Let any man reflect, and then lay his hand upon his heart, and say, that the prophet has not truly described this manner of reasoning, *and so they wrapt it up*. I will not comment here, they are all universals, and have no particular application.

The properties must be minutely considered, so as to see, if the subject be a proper recipient of them; *every one who*, and *blessed and holy is he who*, are indicative of individuals. And a thousand years reign, not term of existence, is predicated of each of them. It implies at least a thousand years existence, it does not imply the whole of existence. Can this be the property of a mortal? Revelation is silent; and natural reason has no probable proofs to exhibit in its favor.

“ All these expressions may very well be understood in a figurative sense. The souls of them, &c. may easily according to the manner of prophetic language, signify persons of like spirit and temper with them, of like faith, patience, constancy and zeal. John the baptist was Elias because he came in the spirit of Elias. Thus, a state of the church, in which a spirit of the ancient martyrs and confessors, and the purity of those times shall return, may be described as a church of martyrs, a church so nearly resembling them in temper, constancy and zeal.”

All the expressions cannot be understood in a figurative sense ; and they do not so understand them. The subjects of the predicates, they will have to be figurative, but not the predicates. The subjects, in their sense are only probationers for immortal life ; in our sense, they have had their probation, and are in possession of immortal life. “ The souls of them that were beheaded, may easily signify persons of like spirit.” How, easily ? Is it an easy matter to suppose that John did not see such as had been beheaded, when he says he did ? This is so far from being easy to me, that I find it inconceivable ; not one of the terms employed about the subjects has any appearance of a figure. *The souls of the persons beheaded*, refer us directly to the martyrs. *Every one who had not worshipped*, has no mystic sense ; *living, reigning, blessedness, holiness, priests of God and of Christ*, are not mystic descriptions. It is here, that the figurative sense creates the mystery ; there is none in the words themselves. It seems utterly impossible for us to know whether one man is like another in spirit, constancy and zeal, if they are not both placed in the same trying situation. It must be granted, that those in the Millennium, will not meet with the same trials and temptations, as have fallen to the lot of the apostles and other christians.

As to John’s being called Elias in the old testament, it has not even the semblance of an argument. I may appeal to those who adduce it, to show how it applies.

A church may be described as a church of martyrs, in which, there shall be a return of their spirit and purity. If any where there must be some good sound sense in this observation ; but I readily confess I do not see it. So far are the predicates from intimating any thing like a church of martyrs, that they expressly warrant the idea, that the subjects were some of them martyrs, not all and that they are now beyond mortality. Several things are predicated of the subjects. I request to be shewn which of them intimates that these subjects have like spirit and zeal as the martyrs.

It is a very easy and natural figure, as well as very common one, in the book of prophecy, to describe persons by the names of such, whose tempers and characters they imitate. Thus the names of Sodom, Egypt, and Babylon, are often ascribed to Rome.” Whether these names are rightly applied, is a question yet to be decided ; but if rightly applied, it would not be an argument against a literal meaning. If Egypt, Sodom and Babylon, represent Rome, it is confessed, that Rome is designated by them, because she is equal to them in wickedness ; but if the souls of them that were beheaded, and the predicates of them, intend mortal beings, then these mortal beings, and the martyrs, are in very different circumstances, and cannot

resemble each other in trials, patience and zeal. Those mortal beings, resemble the martyrs no more than they do the angels. The spirit abstracted from circumstances, is a very general trait, and may be carried up to the Deity himself, so far as purity of spirit is the subject of enquiry.

“ The other expressions of resurrection, of living and reigning, were used before in antient prophecy, to signify the restoration of the church, from a low and afflicted state. Thus the prophet Hosea, exhorting to return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal; he hath smitten and he will bind us up; he adds, after two days will he revive us, or make us live again. On the third day will he raise us up, as from the dead, and we shall live in his sight.” Whether this passage relates to Christ, or to some more distant event, is not yet settled. It remains yet to be shown, what is meant, by *revive*, or *make us live again*. If it could be shown, that the prophecy had its completion in the Jews then in being; it would show, that the words *revive*, or *make us live again*, did not intend a resurrection literally of the dead. We grant, that, *to live again*, and *resurrection*, do not always intend a resurrection of the dead; but they do sometimes intend this precisely, and in this sense, we take the words. “ This is the first resurrection.” And it never will be shown, that it is not the true sense, by showing, that the word has different meanings. When it is said, blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, there can be no doubt in what sense the term *resurrection* is used; it intends the regeneration which our Saviour speaks of Mat. 19. 28. And Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.

“ When the two witnesses were slain, and their dead bodies lay in the street of the great city, the spirit of life from God, entered into them, and they stood on their feet, or they are represented under the figure of being raised from the dead.”—I am persuaded there is no figure here; who the witnesses are, is a question about which the learned are very much divided. The text however must be laid aside, until it is fairly settled, who the witnesses are; I take them to be a collective number of Christians, who have died literally, and who will rise literally.

“ It is moreover observable, that, as all these expressions may be understood in a figurative sense, agreeably to the language of prophecy, so it is more agreeable to understand them so in a book of Revelations, delivered throughout in such a style; every part of the prophecy is so to be understood, the book, the seals, the trumpets, the beasts, the witnesses, the dragon, and old serpent; and why not the resurrection of the Martyrs and Confessors.”—

“ It is farther to be observed, how fully the description of the conversion of the Jews, answers to the Millennium of John; who useth the very words by which their Prophets had foretold their conversion: “ now as this happy state of the church may well be understood of the fullest accomplishments of prophecies, which speak of the conversion of the Jews, and receiving them again into the Church, which St. Paul calls life from the dead, this interpretation will

be the most easy and proper, as most agreeable to the sense in which they are used in the antient prophecies upon the like occasions, a literal and proper resurrection of the martyrs and confessors, who suffered in the heathen Roman empire, is attended with many difficulties; so great as to render that interpretation very doubtful and improbable: a proper and literal resurrection is never in the whole of the new testament expressed or represented, *by the living of the soul*, but by the living, raising, and resurrection of the dead, the raising of the bodies of the saints, of them that sleep in the dust. This doctrine seems not consistent with the happy state of souls departed, or with the high prerogative supposed to belong to the souls of the martyrs. This doctrine does not agree with the accurate description of the resurrection in the holy scriptures; for in all those scriptures there is no mention of a first, and a second resurrection, or that one of them is to be one thousand years after the other. They represent the resurrection to be performed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; they represent at that time, that the dead in Christ shall rise first: but then also we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, and so we shall be ever with the Lord. The scriptures speak constantly of the resurrection of all the saints as of a resurrection, not to a temporal life on earth, but to an eternal life in heaven. Nor does the doctrine agree with the genius of Christian faith, or with the nature of Christian hope; or with the freedom and temper of spirit it requires from the professors of Christianity, who are taught, not to set their affections on things on the earth, but on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

The prophecy seems to suppose such inhabitants of the earth during the Millenium, as were the inhabitants of the earth, when the Beast was destroyed; or men in the usual state of natural succession, not persons raised out of their graves. Here is no intimation that all good and faithful Christians are to be slain at this time, together with the Beast and his followers, to make room for Martyrs, and persons who died some hundred of years before, to inhabit the earth in their room. Besides they are represented in this state of Millenium, as liable to be misled by the deceitful arts of Satan, and the terrors of persecution; for which reason, the safety and security of the Church in this period, is represented, by laying a restraint on Satan, that he should not deceive the nations, till the end of a thousand years. The inhabitants of the earth are then supposed in the prophecy capable of being deceived, and in danger of it. The order of the prophecy seems to confirm this observation; for when the thousand years are expired, Satan must after that be loosed for a little season, and he shall make so bad use of that little time, as to deceive many, so far to deceive them, as to gather a very great number of them together, to attack the saints and the beloved city. Must the new enemies of Christ and his religion, be some of the old persecutors raised from the dead: or some of the Martyrs, after their resurrection, seduced by Satan into his party? or must they be, as the prophecy seems plainly enough to suppose, such a succession of men as now inhabit the earth? The prophecy places the general resurrection after the expiration of the one thousand years,

It should seem then, that a literal and proper resurrection of Martyrs, to live on the earth one thousand years before the general resurrection and judgment, is not a necessary sense of this prophecy, nor so natural and probable a sense as the figurative. The literal sense is liable to many difficulties, and hardly reconcilable to other descriptions of the same prophecy, and to other passages of scripture. But the figurative interpretation, viz. that this prophecy should mean an happy state of the Church on earth, will answer the whole design of the prophecy, and appears the more easy and probable meaning of the words. The Church in peace, free from persecution, and all the deceitful arts of Satan and wicked men, enlarged with the conversion of the Jews, and fulness of the Gentiles, serving God as a kingdom of Priests, in purity of Christian worship, and enjoying all the blessings of protection and divine grace, may well be expressed by living and reigning with Christ."

These are some of the ablest arguments in favour of a figurative construction. It is difficult to find out exactly to what opinion these arguments are opposed. They are generally opposed to a literal construction: but it seems to be necessary to know what were the opinions of those who construed literally; for their opinions might be erroneous. It seems that the foregoing arguments aim at invalidating this idea, that the Martyrs and Confessors only would rise and reign a thousand years. This opinion being entirely erroneous, we need not resort to a figurative sense to confute it. If this be the particular idea which is endeavoured to be destroyed, I am perfectly satisfied with it: but the manner of getting rid of it, may be erroneous; and tend to enforce ideas, much more dangerous, than those designed to be confuted.

If the three verses on which we are remarking, have reference only to the officers of the Millenium kingdom to beings immortal, we must necessarily suppose that there will be other persons besides these, and in a probationary state; and this will not militate against the conversion of the Jews, nor against the fullest accomplishment of the prophecies, which speak of their conversion: a literal sense opens a door for conversion, but a figurative sense shuts every door against it: for all are immediately upon their introduction into this kingdom, blessed and holy; and over such the second death has no power. But we find a very great army destroyed by fire from heaven, and they who hold to a figurative sense, are necessitated to allow it; that these were seduced from the number of those, of whom it is said, the second death has no power over them. It is said, that those contained in the three verses are capable of being deceived; and this is a very evident mistake, it is impossible that he who is holy and blessed and over whom the second death has no power, should be obnoxious to deception: many of the observations in favour of a figurative sense, have no perceivable connection with the matter. What are the difficulties accompanying a literal sense? how does it militate against any description of the resurrection, or against the genius of Christian faith or hope? we are commanded to set our affection on things in heaven, and not on the earth, but what is heaven? may there not be a heaven upon earth? If we are allowed to make use of our reasoning faculties about revelation,

as we do about other sciences; then we must hold, that the figurative sense is chargeable with the most palpable absurdity; it holds, that beings incapable of deception are capable of it; that those over whom the second death has no power, are destroyed by fire from heaven. The figurative constructors hold that the three verses include all the subjects of the Millenium kingdom: and so holding, they are chargeable with absurdity and contradiction, for the qualities cannot belong to mortal probationary beings; or if they do, these beings cannot be deceived, nor be destroyed by fire.

As to the general resurrection's being after the thousand years; we only observe it is in point of order, it is no evidence that it will be so in point of time. The argument here against a literal sense is this, if the general resurrection actually takes place after the thousand years, as it is evident, that good and bad will all be raised at the same time, then all that is said in the three verses, as to the immediate subjects, must be figurative: this argument if well founded, undoubtedly destroys the literal sense, but what has been observed already, shows that it cannot be; we may argue with as much certainty, from the manifest sense of those three verses, about the time of the general resurrection, and indeed with much more certainty, than from the mere position, or order of one text, to the sense of another text: if it can be proved, that the general resurrection will be after the thousand years, I may not conclude from thence, that those three verses are to be taken figuratively, for this is a more natural consequence, I do not comprehend the sense of them.

The passage has suggested different ideas to different expositors; two methods of construction have been generally adopted by them: how nearly the opinions have been divided, as to the two schemes, I cannot tell.

First, that there will be a literal resurrection of martyrs only, a thousand years before the general resurrection; and the direct meaning of the words, the souls of them &c. is insisted on.

Second, that no literal resurrection is to be gathered from the expressions, nothing farther is intended, than a great revival of religion on earth.

Third, That the literal meaning of the expressions is to be adhered to, from which it results, that the subjects in those three verses, are all the faithful raised from the dead, and are constituted officers in the Millenium kingdom: and hence it may be inferred, that the resurrection will be general.

The first scheme cannot be right, because the text has not reference to martyrs only; more suitable and comprehensive words could not have been chosen, to point out all the faithful; life, reigning, blessedness, holiness, not subject to the second death, priests of God, and of Christ, are predicated of the souls of the beheaded, and of every one who did not worship the beast, &c. These amount to a complete universality.

We have already endeavoured to shew, that the second scheme cannot be right; and at present we rely on the proofs exhibited.

The third scheme, I apprehend, is perfectly new: its novelty will, it is to be feared, be an objection against it. According to this scheme, the three verses point out to us only the officers of the

Millenium kingdom. Who then are to be the subjects and probationers? The consequence we allow is unavoidable; they are raised from the grave also. Without entering into a minute examination of this consequence at present, we will take it for granted to be right, in order to compare the second and third schemes together. It may be observed, that many of the objections of those, who have reasoned very well against a literal resurrection of Martyrs only, do not apply at all to this third scheme.

This third scheme answers fully to the descriptions of the prophets, as to the conversion of the Jews, and literally to what Paul says of it, What shall it be, but, or except life from the dead. It answers literally to what Peter says, Glad tidings have been announced for the dead, that they may be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. It answers literally to the idea of the unbelieving Jews being subjects of hope, though concluded under sin, in the time of Paul. It answers literally to the idea of all the families of the earth, all nations, tongues and languages being blessed in Abraham. And to the idea that the gospel shall be preached to every creature.

I know not what idea others may form in their own minds of the prerogatives of martyrs, I can form none higher than those presented to our minds, by the third scheme; wherein is it inconsistent with the genius of Christian faith, or the nature of Christian hope? or rather, how apparently is it consistent with, and the completion of both. The bible is totally silent about the prerogatives of martyrs, and others, until the resurrection; the genius of faith directs to that day, and the nature of hope points to the same: this scheme does not militate against the freedom and temper of spirit required from the professors of Christianity, who are taught not to set their affections on things on the earth, but on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. The predicates of those happy subjects, according to the third scheme, are not earthly things, nor do they require them by sitting their affection on earthly objects, the third scheme holds out to our view, the literal accomplishment of the promises, to the faithful, under the present dispensation; the second scheme discards entirely the literal accomplishment: the apostles are to sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes; and here the persons sitting on thrones are invested with judiciary power. According to the second scheme, this power can only be exercised in passing sentence of condemnation, on the other, it may as well acquit as condemn: all the Christians under the present dispensation, are denominated, by being a holy and royal priesthood according to Peter. And John speaking of the same body of Christians, says, and hath made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth, according to the second scheme, this can never be literally true: the more the promises made to Christians are examined, the more plainly it will appear, that they have no completion, till the day of the resurrection.

I cannot see that the representation of the resurrection, as viewed in the third scheme, is inconsistent with any other description of the resurrection in the bible; it is in some things more particular. The descriptions, are in the three verses, confined entirely to those

whom Paul mentions, *they which are Christs at his coming*. All the qualities and properties of this glorious and happy company, except a definite time of one thousand years, are manifestly ascribed elsewhere to christians, under the present dispensation, and this definite period of time, proves unanswerably, that the life is a resurrection life; for the grammatical construction is, every one lived, and every one reigned a thousand years. I refer the reader not to the translation, but to the Greek. If by disagreement, be meant, that John has not told us in this passage, every thing about the resurrection and all that will be raised at the same time, the fact is so; but the word *disagreement*, is improperly used; a partial relation, if true, will not disagree with a full relation. So far as it goes, it will agree perfectly, and this description of the resurrection, so far as it goes, agrees with other descriptions of the resurrection, and life consequent thereon. But in the figurative sense it agrees not with any thing to be found in the bible. The resurrection here is called the first, and notwithstanding it has not that epithet any where else, yet it is deducible from other passages of scripture, that there must be a first resurrection to happy life. As John gives us only a partial description of the resurrection, it is in a partial sense called the first resurrection. The resurrection is general; but John is here only describing a part that are the most interested in it, and the epithet, first, is applied only to this part. The same idea is collected from the words, *hath made us kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth*. As a general resurrection, it is the only one of the kind, and cannot properly be called the first, but as a resurrection to eternal life and happiness, it is the first, because there must be a second of the same kind. It is true that there will be but one universal and general resurrection of the literally dead, but it is rather confirmed by other passages of scripture, that there will be, at different times, two resurrections to eternal life and happiness. As John did no doubt for wise reasons confine himself to a description of the happy only, it affords a good ground for supposing, that when he mentions the rest of the dead, he only has reference to those, who will be interested in a second happy resurrection, because he does plainly intimate, that they will live again, and as he is only speaking of an happy immortal life, not of life in the abstract; the life they live again, must be an happy immortal life.

These ideas are all easily adjusted, and harmonize with each other, according to the third scheme, but according to the second, there can be no perceivable meaning in the words, *the first resurrection*. It is to be the last revival of religion on earth. If then the term, resurrection, is applicable to it, it should be called the last resurrection. It is said, the prophecy seems to suppose men in the usual state of natural succession. Where are the words that intimate this? Every word seems manifestly opposed to such an idea. It is said, that they are represented as liable to be misled by the arts of Satan. I find no such representation but directly the reverse, so far as respects the particular class described. There will be others on earth, and they will be liable to be deceived.

It is a charge against John, that he does not describe generally; so it is with the deists, that the bible does not describe every thing,

that enters into their own vain imaginations. There is a manifest force and propriety in all John's expressions. How much does he describe in a few plain and intelligible words? But the rest of the dead, not opposed to all that ever died literally, opposed only to those once dead, but now happy immortals. But the rest of the dead, implies not all, that died literally, besides those before described; it implies however fully, that those before described, had been dead literally, they lived not again; that is, an immortal happy life. The opposition is not to existence of any kind, but of a particular kind. The rest of the dead will therefore make up the sum total of happy immortals. What are the rest of the dead? If all these expressions be taken in a figurative sense? Can there be any rational meaning fixed to them? I think not. Having as it appears to me, fully established the sense of the three important verses, I am unconcerned about the consequences. I know they will lead to many extremely unpleasant, as well as pleasant ideas; they will not lead to infidelity, but perhaps they may induce an observation. *I cannot see as you do.* I feel all the force of it; go on ye figurative constructors, preach up enigmas, figure and absurdity; your time is short, and your field is contracted and contracting. Shall he find faith on earth? Yes a genuine pharisaical faith, which would not have believed, though the preacher had come from the dead. I am far from wishing to impose my ideas upon any person; but if I could irritate an examination, I believe it would tend not only to mollify the irritation, but to elucidate an infinitely important subject.

The great number of authors that have favoured a figurative construction, have no great weight in my mind, for this reason, when one author of considerable eminence has advanced a sentiment, twenty others borrow it from him, without giving credit, and without examination; so that in fact we have but the authority of one man for the sentiment. This is, I believe, peculiarly applicable to writers on prophecy.

If the great event of a total change of all the inhabitants of the earth, by a general resurrection is as near at hand, as I have endeavoured to make appear, I cannot find any better and more apt words to illustrate my ideas of the state of civil and political society, from this time to that event, than those of the apostle Paul, 2. Tim. 3. 1. This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof;—from such turn away.

I have remarked before, that the Papal power has not been guilty of apostacy: it adheres to the inspiration of the scriptures, and to many of the essential doctrines of the gospel; and it is not to be questioned, but many Roman Catholics have lived and died sincere Christians. The Mahometans are not apostates. Mahomet himself was a Pagan; the Arabians were gentile idolaters; the great body of Mahometans have not been guilty of apostacy: they only ex-

of character, and therefore we find that they are called Gentiles Rev. 11. 2. for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty-two months.

If neither the Papal power, nor the Mahometan power, have been guilty of apostacy; what power is it, that Paul describes 2. Theff. 2. Now I beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or troubled, &c. as that the day of Christ is at hand. For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away (or an apostacy) first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way; and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion; that they should believe a lye, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

I need scarcely remark here, that this coming is extremely different from Christ's coming invisibly by gracious influences; the day of coming is not to be till sometime after the existence of a very wicked power, which if it has made his appearance at all, is but very lately, and many of the foregoing characteristics apply naturally and unavoidably to a power that has lately began to exist. If the coming of Christ intended no more than a revival of religion, by the invisible operations of the holy Spirit, why should the Thessalonians be in great trouble and anxiety about it? Paul says, when he was yet with them, he told them these things. It seems evidently that their anxious minds were troubled from a misconception of the time, which they apprehended to be then near at hand. To allay their anxiety, he does not tell them how long it will be to that coming, but he gives them and us through them, who are more immediately interested in it, the character of a certain power that must precede that coming; till which power appears, there is no occasion to be anxious about it, because the awful destruction which will take place at the time of that coming, will not be before such a remarkable power rises up.

If Paul who appears not to have been a man of weak nerves, or of a melancholy disposition, could not refrain from weeping when he informed the Philippians of the certain destruction that awaited the enemies of the cross of Christ; it is not improbable that a like circumstance might have taken place when he was with the Thessalonians, and addressed them personally on an event, the most tragic and awful that ever did, or will happen. It is evident that he did address them in such a manner, as to make a deep and lasting impression on their minds; and so as to make them extremely concerned about the event, they not knowing but it might happen in their day,

If the French Republic be in fact the man of sin (and I think we may not decide positively that it is not) it will indeed be a terrible Republic, and I wish sincerely that we may use that kind of language towards her, which Solomon says has a tendency to turn away wrath ; for if we should be drawn into a war with her, there is reason to fear that we should become a part of the man of sin. Ye men of God, ye reverend Clergy, cry aloud and spare not. Vice like an impetuous irresistible torrent, rolls on with an accelerated geometrical progression. Recent experience will suggest the most powerful arguments, to avoid WAR, the enemy of morals and the most bitter scourge of the human race. Contrast the present morals of the United States, with what they were thirty years ago ; the contrast presents an image, that is sufficient to make the whole head sick, and the whole heart faint. And has not war produced this alarming change. What then would be the effects of another war ? If this prostration of morals, and destruction of the fences of virtue be not the most painful consideration, let me appeal to self-interest. Have ye forgot your sufferings in the late war ? Is your prospect any better in case of another war ? Will the same, or will any foreign avenues be open, through which we may obtain articles of the most indispensable necessity ? If we are shut out of every foreign country, our internal resources will soon be dried up, and if there should not be a renewal of paper money, and tender laws, similar effects must be produced in some other way. Will you not then be tempted to curse God and die ? If you should not be, it is not improbable but the people might be tempted to curse you, and let you die. The professors of the Christian religion will retire into private corners, unable to resist the deadly and inexorable adversary, who as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God, who has already turned an accuser, and charged the christian religion with being the cause of all the wickedness and bloodshed that has been in the world for about 1700 years. The plea of innocency, in the mouth of the weak, will be considered as an incurable obstinate fanaticism, improper to be indulged with the enjoyment of any civil rights. How inconsiderable will be the number that will find consolation under such accumulated misfortunes ? Yet there will be some who will join with the prophet, and say, although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines ; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls ; yet I will rejoice in the Lord ; who will hide me in the hollow of his hand, till the trouble be overpast. Weeping may endure for the night, but Joy shall come in the morning.



